

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
OPTIONS FOR FINANCING HOSPITAL ISOLATION FOR SOMEONE
UNABLE TO PAY

Responsibility for payment

M.G.L. c. 111, section 116: “Reasonable expenses incurred by boards of health or by the commonwealth in making the provision required by law for persons infected with smallpox or other disease dangerous to the public health, other than tuberculosis, shall be paid by such persons, or, if such person is a minor, by his parents, *if he or they are able to pay*; otherwise, *by the town where he has a residence* upon the approval of the bill by the board of health of such town or by the department of public health of such town or by the department of public health when such person is determined to be a chronically nonresident [homeless] person.” [emphasis added]

Options to consider when the patient is unable to pay for hospitalization

- Engage in contingency response planning with your regional coalition so that you can use some of the funds that you have received through DPH for preparedness. Consult with your Regional Coordinator on the procedures for this use of the money.
- See if your city or town has any local emergency funds that could be tapped.
- Negotiate with the hospital where the patient is to go, to provide free care.